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CD NO.

COUNTRY Greece

DATE DISTR. 4 MAY 1949

SUBJECT ETAX

NO. OF PAGES 2 25X1A2g

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NO. OF ENCLS.
(LISTED BELOW)

DATE OF INFO. Late 1948
25X1X6

SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

1. ETAX (Eidikon Tagma Axiomatikon - Special Battalion of Officers) has been formed from about 700 officers and men from Makronisos.
2. Part of this formation remained in Evvia for a while, where it took part in reconnaissance operations. There the guerrillas carefully avoided all contact or fighting with the men of ETAX; the impression prevailing among the men of ETAX is that guerrilla leaders had issued a special order to follow such tactics.
3. After Evvia, they were transferred to the Peloponnesus (Nemea-Achladokambos-Tripolis), where the following events took place:
 - a. Four rebels (one of them an officer) joined them.
 - b. Seventeen men and officers were captured in the fight at Piana.
 - c. Near Tripolis, where they were in formation, a whole platoon (seven officers and twenty men) deserted or were captured.

The newspapers wrote about b. above. That operation was in reality quite a success for the guerrillas. The General Staff slightly misrepresented the facts. It was the guerrillas who got the seventeen captured men, their weapons, five Bren guns, blankets, et cetera.

4. The impressions received from the above operation were that:
 - a. The guerrillas avoided shooting to kill.
 - b. The guerrillas did not expect that they would be attacked by the men of ETAX, or that the latter would really offer resistance when attacked.
 - c. There was no understanding between the guerrillas and groups or individuals of ETAX (if there had been, at least two companies would have been captured along with all their supplies).
5. As regards 3.c. above, it is not certain whether the ETAX men deserted or were actually captured. There was no fighting, the platoon disappeared,

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and it is very likely that there was an understanding, at least between some of the men of the platoon and the guerrillas.

6. In addition to the facts and conclusions expressed above, source formed the following opinions:
- a. An undetermined percentage (10 to 30 percent) of the ETAX men are anti-Communist.
 - b. A considerable number of real Communists remain among the ETAX units.
 - c. The rest of the men in ETAX are devoting their attention to the problem of how best to get along; if the hardships were not so great, they would prefer to be with the guerrillas. They are also restrained by fear of reprisals against their families.
7. As far as the fighting quality of ETAX is concerned, under the circumstances related above it is not far behind that of other units, and has shown about 70 to 80 percent superiority in engagements so far. Their losses up to the start of the year, (dead and wounded) are almost nil. It is thought that their fighting quality would decrease in the face of greater difficulties or dangers.

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ Comment: Although delayed, it is believed that this report may cast some light on the qualities of the "reformed battalions".

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